

9-7-1884

Letter from Anne Whitney, Shelburne, New Hampshire, to Maria Weston Chapman, 1884 September 7

Anne Whitney

Wellesley College Archives

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.wellesley.edu/whitney_correspondence

Recommended Citation

Whitney, Anne and Wellesley College Archives, "Letter from Anne Whitney, Shelburne, New Hampshire, to Maria Weston Chapman, 1884 September 7" (1884). *Papers of Anne Whitney (MSS.4): Correspondence*. 614.
https://repository.wellesley.edu/whitney_correspondence/614

This Correspondence is brought to you for free and open access by the Papers of Anne Whitney (MSS.4) at Wellesley College Digital Scholarship and Archive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Papers of Anne Whitney (MSS.4): Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Wellesley College Digital Scholarship and Archive. For more information, please contact ir@wellesley.edu.

you - & send no more than
if you had emigrated to another
planet - I am now in such
a period - & without thinking
of the relevancy of the phrase
I said to myself ^{this morning} - Here we
are in another glacial period.
(Thinking of you & of how long
it was since your last) - &
I wonder what the combination
of circumstances may be - what
reversal of the poles - what
attractions of other or distant
orbs that brings about this
state of affairs - Third - I
do not allow for a moment
any likeness in the superficial
bearing of the words - I believe
in no glacial vapor arising
between you & me. it was a
mere trick of words whose only
kinship with my thought lay in
the fact of the irregular periodicity
of the one & the other event.

184
Chelburne N. H. Sept 7.
My Dear Friend. Even
once in 21000 years the
axis of the earth performs
a sort of - as far as I can
make out - semi - semi -
Summer - Now - when
at ^{the} ~~the~~ extreme of this
period the northern hemisphere
at present this occurs in summer
is on its aphelion in winter -
it is naturally very cold
about these parts. Apples
will not grow here. It is not
pleasant living here - You would
not - get to Boston more than
once in 10 years, or in the

time it would take to grow
a solid lard-like protection
from the biting blasts.

Now once in much longer
& irregular periods of time
(viz. ^{orbit of the} Jukes) the earth by a
singular concatenation of planetary
circumstances is drawn from
a ^{partially} round to a highly elliptical
shape. & when these 2
phenomena coincide - viz.
when the northern hemisphere
in winter touches its Aphelion
& that aph. is 4 times or
thereabouts further from
the sun than now there
is a still more uncomfortable
state of things in & about Boston.
In fact the ice is so thick
we cannot see the light thro

it: & in order to get to a
country where we might be able
to do without skates we should
have to go far south of
the equator. This as you
know is what is called the
glacial period. And why
do I recount these to you
familiar phenomena?
This let me explain.
Kind friend that you are
you write to me for long
periods of time with a courtesy
may a levity of four
good will that should make
me ashamed considering how
meagre is the return I make
you. Then come times when
like Count Rudolstadt you
sum to retire into some sub-
terranean & hear no more of

Sept 7¹⁸⁴

So much for that.
How are you in short?

We do not go home
this week. but may do
so the last of next. The
women of our household
go next Friday to sit the
house in order, & we shall
follow naturally. It has
been a beautiful season
for all its fierce storms.
& a part of my pleasure
arises from the gradually
improving state of things.
The constructive turn within
me is shut off in one
direction & takes to another
& this is the secret I begin
to think of my almost blind
mistake turning towards a

Country estate. Where I can
mould & mix my heart's
content without hindrance,
from any person or thing
save my own limitations
in one way & another.

I pity (as Mrs. Lwiner said
of herself if out of work) any-
one who has to live with me
if this faculty which lies
very deep in my nature is
not allowed play either in
my studio or the world outside.

So write if it comes
handy. & if not — not.

You know I must know
some how. So send word
if no other way. & know
me yours always.

With Adeline's love.
Your last is dated the 28th —

I overlooked the question
about the Free-Trade Paper.
No. do not send it here.
When I get home I may like
to see it. Thanks — all the
same.